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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 10 CALCUTTA 000246

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SENSITIVE

STATE FOR SA/INS, S/CT AND INR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PINS](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: INDIA'S NORTHEAST MILITANCY: AN OVERVIEW

1. (U) SUMMARY. This cable provides an overview of the "alphabet soup" of ethnic insurgencies that have plagued India's Northeast throughout its history. The first three paragraphs provide a broad overview of the factors that have spawned these conflicts and should be of general interest to India policymakers. The remainder details the history and activities of the main individual groups and is targeted to a more specialist audience. END SUMMARY.

BACKGROUND: ALIENATION BREEDS CONFLICT

2. (U) Northeast India, home to nearly 40 million people, is surrounded by international boundaries with China, Bhutan, Burma and Bangladesh. The population of the Northeast is largely of East and Central Asian origin and is culturally quite distinct from the rest of South Asia; ethnically as well as geographically it is considered to be a gateway that links India to East and Southeast Asia. The region is connected to the rest of India by a narrow piece of land, the 21-kilometer "chicken's neck" between Bangladesh and Nepal, and comprises eight states - Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. Over 150 indigenous communities speaking more than 420 languages and dialects inhabit the area. While non-tribals dominate Assam and Tripura, over 60 per cent of the other states are populated by tribes scheduled in the Indian Constitution. Moreover, there are radical differences between the inhabitants of the hills and plains in the region, like the Meiteis and the Nagas of Manipur. Historically, some of these communities did have cultural and economic ties with the rest of India but politically they were never the subjects of the empires or kingdoms that ruled India prior to the advent of the British. Annexation brought the Northeast into the fold of British India in the second half of the 19th century. Policies initiated then introduced changes that contributed to ethnic tensions in the region.

3. (SBU) With independence in 1947, the Indian ruling elite tried to integrate the Northeast into the Indian state with a carrot and stick policy. But from the 1950s onwards, this was met with resistance by the Naga insurgency. In subsequent decades, other communities also took to arms and the scale of conflict prevalent in the region has ebbed and flowed, but has frequently been akin to low intensity warfare. The partition of India was disastrous for the Northeast since the creation of East Pakistan resulted in severance of inland waterways, roads and railways, access to Chittagong port and vital economic linkages. Partition also brought waves of unwanted migration that upset the demographic equations in the region. There was no economic development to match the new needs of the region, and the backwardness heightened the people's feeling of isolation and alienation vis-à-vis "mainland" India. For a long period the Northeast remained largely excluded from India's process of nation-building and modernization. Development funds for the states have often fallen into corrupt hands and leaked into the coffers of insurgent groups. The complete failure of the political leadership of the region enabled the ethnic groups to aggressively voice their sub-national aspirations and the easy availability of arms led to further deterioration in the security situation. For most of its history the GOI conceived the region as a strategic area where military strength should be concentrated to maintain order, a view that was strongly reinforced by the Sino-Indian War in 1962. At the same time, the government's management of porous international borders remained ineffective.

4. (SBU) Northeast conflicts are broadly perceived as ethnic identities confronting the mainstream Indian state. However, a closer look reveals a greater complexity. Confrontations may be categorized as a) indigenous group versus state; b) tribe versus tribe; and c) tribal versus non-tribal. In any particular conflict, more than one of these elements may overlap. The objectives of the various movements have included complete secession and independence, state formation, regional autonomy, a right to self-determination, and eviction of outsiders. Some of the groups have largely lost touch with their ideological roots and are essentially maintaining a livelihood through politically justified banditry. Each state has specific concerns and each people their particular grievances. Although rebel alliances exist, each group has its own agenda that often does not accommodate the aspirations of other groups. For instance, the ULFA does not approve of the NSCN-IM's goal of

Greater Nagaland, since it would incorporate parts of Assam. Overall, the primary battle of each group is for territorial supremacy over areas they claim to represent. For this reason, the Nagas are in conflict with Manipuris and Kukis, and the Bodos have killed Santhals.

THE ALPHABET SOUP INSURGENCIES: WHO ARE THEY?

15. (SBU) Following are sketches of the history and current activities of the major insurgent movements in the area, broken down by state, according to the following index:

- A) Assam
 - United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)
 - Bodo ethnic groups
 - National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)
 - Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT)
 - B) Nagaland
 - National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM)
 - National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Khaplang (NSCN-K)
 - C) Tripura
 - National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)
 - All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)
 - D) Manipur
 - United National Liberation Front (UNLF)
 - People's Liberation Army (PLA)
 - The People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)
 - Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL)
 - E) Meghalaya
 - Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC)
 - Hynniewtre National Liberation Council (HNLC)
 - F) State-wise listing of minor groups by name and acronym
- A) ASSAM:

United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)

Assam, the most populous state in the region, has a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society. A majority of ethnic Assamese and 16 tribes constitute Assam's indigenous population. Assam's peripheral location in India, its resultant under-development and dramatic changes in its demography caused by an influx of Bangladeshis across the borders have triggered militancy. The ULFA, the most formidable insurgent outfit, demands sovereignty for Assam.

It is a secessionist ethnic insurgent socialist organization employing terrorist tactics. Founded on April 7, 1979, the ULFA enjoyed mass support in its initial years but gradually lost its popularity. From its inception to 1985, ULFA failed to make any real impact since the Assam Movement against "foreigners," specifically Bengali settlers, was led by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and dominated the state's political scene. The Assam Movement formally ended on August 15, 1985 and some of its leaders formed the state government. It was then that ULFA made its presence felt and launched its mission to "liberate Assam from Delhi's colonialism." New Delhi banned the ULFA in 1990 and started a military offensive against it. The ULFA's kidnappings, murders, extortion and its leadership's big business undertakings in neighboring countries -- particularly Bangladesh -- harmed its public image. Public opinion turned against ULFA when its leaders expressed support for Pakistan during the 1999 Kargil military operation. In 2005, the United States added the group to the Other Selected Terrorist Organizations (OSTO) list.

In 1997 a spurt in ULFA activities led the GOI to form the Unified Command -- of army, paramilitary, police and state Government. Since 1998, hundreds of ULFA members have surrendered, but hardcore militants stayed in their camps in Bhutan, Burma and Bangladesh. The ULFA's numerical strength was depleted by the attack on its Bhutan camps in December 2003 by the Royal Bhutan Army and the Indian Army. The estimated committed cadre strength now is about 700. In its initial years, government officials, businessmen, tea planters and politicians were the major targets. In recent years it has killed civilians including children as well as Hindi-speaking migrants. In 2003 ULFA killed more than 60 "outsiders," mainly from the state of Bihar, in Assam. On August 15, 2004, India's Independence Day, a bomb blast in Dhemaji killed an estimated 13 people, including 6 children, and injured 21. In addition, numerous bomb blasts at oil installations and other infrastructure are regularly reported.

The GOI accuses ULFA of maintaining links with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Directorate General of Field Intelligence of Bangladesh. Intelligence sources believe that the ULFA procures and trades in arms with other Northeast

Indian outfits and the Maoists of Nepal. The GOI claims that ULFA workers also visit Nepal and have some connection with the Maoists. Important leaders include Paresh Barua (Commander-in-Chief) and Arabinda Rajkhowa (Chairman) based in Bangladesh. ULFA workers are believed to be present in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Nagaland. The ULFA has linkages with other ethnic insurgent outfits active in neighboring states like the National Socialist Council of Nagaland - Khaplang (NSCN-K) and the United National Liberation Front (UNLFF). Other ULFA "satellites" - like the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) and the Kamtapur Liberation Organization (KLO) - were badly affected by the Bhutan operation.

In 2004-2005, Assamese author Indira Goswami took the initiative to work out a way to bring the GOI and the ULFA to the negotiating table. Despite the GOI's willingness, the ULFA time and again set conditions for talks that are difficult to fulfill. The outfit insisted on the pre-condition that sovereignty should figure in the talks, a provision the GOI reportedly accepted with some reluctance in the hope that this would facilitate peace. But then the ULFA leadership insisted that those leaders of the outfit who have been arrested and detained in Assam should be released. As of July 2005, this has created a deadlock since the government cannot release insurgent leaders without formal assurance of a ceasefire and negotiations by the ULFA. Assam's Congress Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi is reportedly keen that the detainees be released, but New Delhi is reluctant. New Delhi has also tried to persuade Bangladesh to crack down on Indian militant camps on its soil and to extradite ULFA leader Anup Chetia. Significantly, although the ULFA has attacked "outsiders," it has not targeted Bangladeshi migrants in Assam in recent times. Analysts interpret this as the result of a tacit understanding between the outfit and the Bangladesh authorities that shelter its leaders.

The ULFA's inclusion in the U.S. OSTO list drew a favorable response from Assam's security officials, although the Congress, preparing for state elections in 2006, expressed reservations on the timing of this development. Security analysts felt that the listing was not only a warning to the ULFA, but also to Bangladesh where the militant leadership lives with support from the establishment. However, the ULFA responded with an appeal to the U.S. to intervene in the "political conflict" and help peace dawn on Assam - a sign that the outfit is responsive to U.S. and global opinion.

BODO ETHNIC GROUPS

National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB)

The National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) is a secessionist ethnic insurgent organization demanding an independent state for the Bodo ethnic group in Assam. Formed on October 3, 1986, and led by Chairman Ranjan Daimary, this is one of the most dreaded outfits of Northeast India and one that shared close ties with the ULFA. The group's strength has dwindled since the 2003 operations in Bhutan. The NDFB also suffered serious setbacks in the recent past with the arrests of senior leaders. The group indulged in hit and run operations on security forces, explosions in public places and have targeted innocent people. The organization is allegedly supported by the ISI of Pakistan, and is believed to have bases in Bangladesh, Burma, and perhaps still a lingering presence in Bhutan.

In October 2004, the NDFB declared a ceasefire with the GOI and then extended it for another six months in April 2005. On May 25, a GOI-NDFB truce agreement was signed by Special Secretary in the Union Home Ministry Anil Chaudhary, Assam Home Secretary B K Gohain and NDFB General Secretary Gobinda Basumatary. This agreement came into effect from June 1, 2005. According to contacts, the truce is similar to the one the GOI signed with the Naga outfit NSCN-IM, including the ground-rules of the ceasefire, suspension of operations and signaling the beginning of formal talks. Sources said that the NDFB and GOI had been holding unofficial parleys since April 2005, and the signing of the agreement is only its culmination and formalization.

Another Bodo outfit, the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) has already negotiated with the Center and made peace. The BLT and the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) participated in polls for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) on May 13, that would facilitate a sort of limited self-governance to Bodos in Kokrajhar, Baska, Udalguri and Chirang districts. The NDFB did not participate in the polls. The Bodo groups are disunited and the NDFB, now isolated, has come under pressure to make peace.

However, the Government of India may find it difficult to find an early solution to the problem with the NDFB still sticking to its demand for an independent Bodoland. If the outfit maintains this stand, the government may find it difficult to persuade them to accept more powers under the Indian constitution. Moreover, the BTC was created only in December 2003 after the signing of the peace pact between the Central and State governments and the erstwhile militant group Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT). The NDFB and BLT are rivals and it will be difficult for the government to find any peace formula that will

satisfy both groups.

B) NAGALAND:

National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM)

When India became independent in 1947, the Nagas (then inhabitants of the Naga Hills in undivided Assam) were unwilling to be part of the new republic and launched an armed struggle for a sovereign Naga homeland. The creation of Nagaland state in 1963 failed to contain their militancy. The Nagas' mindset compelled them to launch a separatist crusade, even symbolically declaring "independence" from the British one day before India did so in 1947. Neither economic problems nor the lack of development motivated the birth of Naga insurgency. Rather, cultural and historical factors played the dominant role in the Naga ethnic upheaval. At the time of independence the Nagas were not psychologically prepared to be part of India because they had never in their history perceived themselves as Indians.

The Naga secessionist movement originated to ensure a Naga way of life in a Naga homeland. The nature of Naga society itself prompted the birth of their "nationalist" movement. The most important impact of the British occupation of the Naga Hills from the mid-19th century was the spread of Christianity and Western education. Along with the conversion of large sections of Nagas, the education provided by the missionaries helped weaken the exclusive clan allegiance of each sub-tribe and paved the way for the growth of a pan-Naga consciousness. A sort of common Naga identity based on Christianity emerged. The Naga community in India consists of 17 major tribes and at least 20 sub-tribes. They inhabit primarily Nagaland, and small areas in Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Other Naga tribes live across the border in Burma. There have been about 20,000 insurgency-related deaths in Nagaland since India's independence.

The movement for a sovereign Nagaland by Nagas was one of the first major challenges to India's nation-building process. The Naga National Council (NNC) under Angami Zapu Phizo initially led the revolt against the Center. In 1963, New Delhi created Nagaland state but could not quell the movement. Aided by Pakistan and China, and despite confrontations with Indian security forces, Naga rebels continued with violence. The NNC was banned in 1972. NNC moderates accepted the Indian Constitution by the 1975 Shillong Accord with New Delhi. Subsequently, NNC radicals formed the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) in 1980 for the cause of a greater Nagaland encompassing all Naga inhabited areas in the Northeast. There were inter-tribe clashes within the NSCN. It split in 1988 with one faction under Isak Chisi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah and the other led by S. Khaplang. The NSCN-(Isak-Muivah) (NSCN-IM) emerged the more powerful of the two outfits. A cease-fire was initiated between the GOI and NSCN-IM in 1997, but negotiations to ensure a lasting peace have not progressed much since then. In April 2000 the NSCN-Khaplang (NSCN-K) group declared a cease-fire, but no productive talks have ensued. A successful outcome to the Naga talks would set a precedent for all other Northeast insurgencies and is therefore viewed by many as crucial for peace in the region.

The NSCN-IM is an insurgent group of Nagas, operating in Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh. The Tangkhul tribe of Nagas based in the Manipur hills dominates the outfit. The estimated cadre strength is 4,500. The NSCN-IM's objective is to establish Greater Nagaland (Nagalim) consisting of all Naga inhabited areas in Northeast India. The outfit has linkages in Burma, Bangladesh, Thailand and the Netherlands. General Secretary Thuingaleng Muivah and Chairman Isak Chisi Swu are negotiating for a peace settlement with GOI, and have virtually given up the demand for full sovereignty. During the BJP regime at the Center, New Delhi acknowledged the "unique history" of the Nagas, something that the NSCN interpreted as a sign of a positive direction in the negotiations. In January 2003, the NSCN-IM leadership, until then living in exile either in Bangkok or in Amsterdam, visited India after decades for talks with the GOI. Despite the optimism, the two sides reached no substantial agreements.

With the new Congress government in New Delhi since May 2004, the peace negotiations seem to remain deadlocked. The UPA Government's Common Minimum Program described the borders of the Northeast states as inviolable. This means that the demand for Greater Nagaland (comprising parts of Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh) cannot be met. That said, it is the vehement - and in the past violent - opposition of the neighboring states that really constrains the Center from agreeing to re-draw the state boundaries on strictly ethnic lines. On other issues, the GOI is quite flexible and is believed to have unofficially agreed to the rebels' demand for greater autonomy in all departments barring currency, external affairs, communication and defense, but the NSCN-IM leadership is unwilling to compromise on the question of territorial integrity of Naga inhabited areas. The issue is highly contentious since the NSCN-IM's leadership is dominated by Tangkhuls, who are mostly from Manipur. The NSCN-IM has called on Nagas to be prepared for any eventuality, implicitly threatening the GOI with a return to arms. The outfit's charter of demands also includes a

separate flag, opening of trade and tourism centers under the new Naga flag, control over taxation, greater control over natural resources and a new name for the state assembly in their ethnic language. The rebel leaders returned to India in December 2004, but departed again in early July 2005, apparently without having achieved any progress in the talks.

National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Khaplang (NSCN-K)

The Naga insurgency is fraught with tribal factionalism. The NSCN-K is active in eastern Nagaland, parts of Arunachal Pradesh and Burma. It is the rival group of NSCN-IM, and is led by Chairman S.S. Khaplang. The NSCN-K was formed on April 30, 1988, following an assassination attempt on the General Secretary of what emerged as the rival outfit NSCN-IM,

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Thuingaleng Muivah. Clannish divisions among the Nagas (Konyaks and Tangkhuls) were the primary reason behind the split of the NSCN in 1988. The Konyaks formed the NSCN-K (Khaplang) under the leadership of Khole Konyak and Khaplang.

This group aims at establishing a Greater Nagaland comprising Naga inhabited areas in eastern India and contiguous areas in Burma. The organization runs a government in exile, with its cadre strength exceeding 2,000. A large section of the group's workers reside in Burma, where it maintains training camps and its headquarters. Although it is under ceasefire with the GOI, there have been no negotiations as yet. There are frequent reports of clashes between cadres of NSCN-IM and NSCN-K in and around Nagaland, something that has contributed to growing disunity within the Naga community. The Government of Burma has reportedly cracked down occasionally on the camps of the NSCN-K.

C) TRIPURA:

National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)

A tribal insurgent outfit in Tripura, the NLFT was first formed in 1989 by some top leaders of the rebel Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) which surrendered following an accord with the Rajiv Gandhi government in 1988. It has two factions - one led by Biswamohan Debbarma and the other by Nayanbashi Jamatia. NLFT's founder-president Dhananjay Reang was ousted by a coup led by Tripuri (tribal) leaders, the Debbarmas, in December 1993. The Debbarma faction is dominant, aiming to establish an "independent" Tripura through armed struggle. It resorts to killings and abductions of Bengalis (whose influx have reduced the tribals to a minority) and sometimes of tribals. The estimated strength is 800 cadres. The outfit is believed to have most of its camps in Bangladesh (from where they conduct hit and run operations in Tripura's border areas) and some in Burma. The weaker NLFT faction is led by the Jamatia community.

In April 2004, the Jamatia faction of NLFT signed a memorandum with representatives of the State and GOI, agreeing to a cessation of hostilities. In Tripura, where the ruling government is led by the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), the NLFT has in the past supported the opposition Congress Party (through a "legitimate" front organization that entered an alliance) and also unleashed significant violence before and during elections. However, with the Congress having now weakened considerably in state politics, the NLFT's violence has been toned down. Indian security forces have also enticed some rebel workers of the NLFT to desert.

All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)

The All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) was founded on July 11, 1990, under the leadership of Ranjit Debbarma. It was initially called the All Tripura Tribal Force, a small group operating in pockets of North and South districts of Tripura. Its objective is to evict outsiders (Bengalis) and establish independent Tripura, and also to restore land to dispossessed tribals. The cadre strength is now approximately 600. By 1991, it had emerged as a formidable group, but in March 1994, more than 1,600 cadres surrendered under an amnesty scheme offered by the state government. It is a group of ATTF cadres who did not surrender who subsequently revived the organization.

The ATTF headquarters are believed to be located at Tarabon in Bangladesh. ATTF cadres are reported to have received training in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh and the outfit is said to have a number of bases there. In April 2004, ATTF's Ranjit Debbarma laid down three pre-conditions for peace talks with the GOI - migrants into Tripura after 1949 and whose names did not figure in the voters' list of 1952 should be declared foreigners; sovereignty should be a point of discussion in the peace talks; and a representative of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) should be present during the peace talks. These conditions were not accepted and no progress regarding a peace procedure has been made so far. In recent years ATTF is believed to have worked in alliance with the ULFA. However, the outfit's violent activities have declined over the past year.

D) MANIPUR:

United National Liberation Front (UNLF)

The oldest Meitei insurgent group in Manipur, the UNLF was founded in 1964 and is led by Rajkumar Meghen. The armed wing of this outfit is called the Manipur People's Army. The objective is to establish an independent and socialist Manipur, a state the UNLF claims was "annexed" by India in 1949. UNLF leaders established a relationship with the authorities of erstwhile East Pakistan and underwent military training there in 1969. The UNLF shared good relations with both Pakistan and China. In June 1975, UNLF leader N. Bisheswar Singh and 16 other Meitei (Manipuri) rebels went to Lhasa to seek Chinese assistance.

The outfit has an estimated strength of 2,500, with training camps believed to be in Burma and Bangladesh. In 1990, the UNLF along with other NE insurgent groups like ULFA, NSCN-K and the Kuki National Army floated the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front to wage a "united struggle for the independence of Indo-Burma." The outfit has consistently attacked security personnel.

In February 2005, the UNLF mooted a four-point proposal to bring the Indo-Manipur conflict to an end. The proposal included: a plebiscite under United Nations supervision to elicit the opinion of the people of Manipur on the core issue of Manipur's independence; deployment of a UN peace keeping force in Manipur to ensure the process is free and fair; surrender of arms by the UNLF to the UN force, matched with the withdrawal of Indian troops; and handing over of political power by the UN in accordance with the results of the plebiscite. These conditions were unacceptable to the GOI and no progress has been made so far.

People's Liberation Army (PLA)

The PLA is another Meitei outfit in Manipur with a political wing, the Revolutionary People's Front (RPF). The PLA was established under the leadership of N. Bisheswar Singh in September 1978. Now led by I. Chaoren and running a government in exile in Bangladesh, the outfit aims at organizing a revolutionary front covering the entire Northeast and uniting all ethnic groups, including Meiteis, Nagas and Kukis, to liberate Manipur. The PLA is believed to have camps in Burma and Bangladesh. The outfit's estimated strength would be 3,000 and it has targeted security personnel and local political leaders. It maintains links with the UNLF, PREPAK, as well as the NSCN-K, ULFA, and the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) of Burma. The RPF also functions as moral police - it banned the showing of Hindi films since these allegedly corrupted Manipuri culture. The outfit also punishes drug traders.

The People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)

PREPAK was formed in 1977 demanding the expulsion of "outsiders" from the state. Led by Achamba Singh and Tajila, the group has an estimated cadre strength of 1,000. It is primarily trained by the NSCN-IM. The PREPAK is part of the Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF), an umbrella organization also including the UNLF and PLA. Other than the Manipur valley, PREPAK operates in small areas of Nagaland and Mizoram. It reportedly received weapons and training from the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) of Burma and has camps in Bangladesh.

Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL)

The KYKL, another Meitei insurgent group, was formed in January 1994. It consisted of breakaway groups from the UNLF, the PREPAK and the Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP). The outfit aims at reforming and rebuilding Manipuri society by cleansing it of immoral activities, drug trade and corruption. The outfit claims to follow the principle of "all for one and one for all" with regard to the entire Northeast region. In 2001, the outfit launched 'Operation New Kangleipak,' an 'anti-corruption' campaign to 'clean up' the educational system in Manipur. It also pledged open support to other terrorist groups who reportedly work against the narcotics trade, drug addiction, and immoral practices. Led by Namoijam Oken and Achou Toijamba, it engages widely in extortion and works jointly with the NSCN-IM. In 2004, the Vice Chancellor of Manipur University N. Bijoy Singh and Registrar R.K. Ranjan were kidnapped by the KYKL and later released after being shot in the legs. According to a KYKL statement, both were punished for flouting rules in the appointment of a university official. Along with the RPF, the KYKL has meted out corporal punishment to drug traffickers and those indulging in other forms of corruption.

E) MEGHALAYA:

Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC)

The ANVC was formed in December 1995 with the goal of attaining a homeland for the Garo tribe in the Garo Hills area of Meghalaya and Kamrup and Goalpara districts of Assam. Led by Dilash R. Marak, the ANVC is active in the Garo Hills and the West Khasi Hills of the state. It resorts largely to extortion and currently works with the ULFA. The ANVC is said to have

some camps in Bangladesh. Incidents of abduction are frequent and the trading community is often compelled to provide funds. In July 2004, a cease-fire agreement was signed between the GOI and the ANVC. A seven member ANVC team signed the agreement in New Delhi. A ceasefire-monitoring cell and two designated camps for housing the surrendered militants were set up in the Garo Hills region. However, the government has accused the ANVC of violating the ceasefire ground rules while the rebels have questioned the government's sincerity in starting -- or not starting -- the peace talks. Negotiations for peace are yet to commence.

Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC)

The HNLC was created in 1992 when Meghalaya's first militant outfit, the Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC), split. The Hynniewtreps claim to represent the Khasi and Jaintia tribes, while the Achiks represent the Garos. The HNLC aims at establishing a state exclusively for Khasis, and free of any major presence of the Garos. The outfit also intends to evict outsiders. Led by Julius Dorphang, the HNLC operates primarily in the Khasi Hills and maintains contact with the NSCN-IM. It engages in killings and abductions.

Prominent Meghalaya church leader Reverend P.B.M. Basaiawmoit recently announced that the HNLC has agreed to a ceasefire with the government. The group has set a pre-condition that talks should be held outside the country. They also want a formal invitation either from the Prime Minister or from the Union Home Minister. However, no concrete progress has yet been made in the direction of a ceasefire.

F) AND MANY MORE...

The preceding 13 outfits demonstrate something of the intricacy of insurgency in India's Northeast. However, these are only the "major" groups. There follows a list of nearly 100 other groups -- most admittedly small and relatively insignificant -- that reveal how truly complex and widespread the phenomenon of insurgency in the Northeast has become.

Glossary: "Alphabet Soup" by State

Arunachal Pradesh

ADF	Arunachal Dragon Force
NLFA	National Liberation Front of Arunachal
UPVA	United People's Volunteers of Arunachal

Assam

AAASS	All Assam Adivasi Suraksha Samiti
ACMF	Adivasi Cobra Militant Force
ANCF	Adivasi National Commando Force
ASF	Adivasi Security Force
ATF	Assam Tiger Force
BCF	Birsa Commando Force
BVYLF	Barak Valley Youth Liberation Force
BLTF	Bodo Liberation Tiger Force
BTF	Bengali Tiger Force
DHD	Dima Halam Daoga
GNF	Garo National Front
GTF	Gorkha Tiger Force
HLAA	Hindu Liberation Army of Assam
ILAA	Islamic Liberation Army of Assam
ISS	Islamic Sevak Sangh
KLO	Kamatapur Liberation Organisation
KNV	Karbi National Volunteers
KPF	Karbi People's Front
KRLO	Koch-Rajbongshi Liberation Organisation
KRPF	Koch Rajbongshi Protection Force
MLA	Muslim Liberation Army
MLF	Muslim Liberation Front
MLTA	Muslim Liberation Tigers of Assam
MSCA	Muslim Security Council of Assam
MSF	Muslim Security Force
MTF	Muslim Tiger Force
MULFA	Muslim United Liberation Front of Assam
MULTA	Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam
MVF	Muslim Volunteer Force
NDFB	Natinal Democratic Front of Bodoland
RMC	Revolutionary Muslim Commandos
RNSF	Rabha National Security Force
TLAA	Tiwa Liberation Army of Assam
TNRF	Tiwa National Revolutionary Force
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Asom
ULMA	United Liberation Militia of Assam
UMLFA	United Muslim Liberation Front of Assam
UPDS	United People's Democratic Solidarity

Manipur

CKRF	Chin Kuki Revolutionary Front
HPC	Hmar People's Convention
(Also known as HRF - Hmar Revolutionary Front)	
HPC(D)	Hmar People's Convention (Democratic)

IKL		Tripak Kanba Lup
INF		Islamic National Front
IPRA	Indigenous People's Revolutionary Alliance	
IRF		Islamic Revolutionary Front
KCP		Kangleipak Communist Party
KDF		Kuki Defence Force
KIA		Kuki Independent Army
KIF		Kuki International Force
KKK		Kangleipak Kanba Kanglup
KLF		Kuki Liberation Front
KLO		Kangleipak Liberation Organisation
KNA		Kuki National Army
KNF		Kuki National Front
KNV		Kuki National Volunteers
KRF		Kuki Revolutionary Front
KRPC	Kom Rem	People's Convention
KSF		Kuki Security Force
KYKL	Kanglei	Yawol Kanna Lup
MLTA	Manipur	Liberation Tiger Army
MPA		Manipur People's Army
MPLF	Manipur	People's Liberation Front
	(Unified platform of UNLF, PLA and PREPAK)	
PLA		Peoples' Liberation Army
PRA		People's Republican Army
PREPAK	People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak	
PULF	People's United Liberation Front	
RPF		Revolutionary People's Front
UKLF	United	Kuki Liberation Front
UNLF	United	National Liberation Front
ZRA		Zomi Revolutionary Army
ZRV		Zomi Revolutionary Volunteers

Meghalaya

ANVC	Achik National Volunteers Council
HNLC	Hynniewtre National Liberation Council
PLF-M	Peoples' Liberation Front of Meghalaya

Mizoram

BNLF	Bru National Liberation Front
HRF	Hmar Revolutionary Front

Nagaland

NNC Naga	Nationalist Council
NSCN (IM)	National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah)
NSCN (K)	National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Khaplang)

Tripura

ATLO	All Tripura Liberation Organisation
ATTF	All Tripura Tiger Force
BMS	Bangla Mukti Sena
BNCT	Borok National Council of Tripura
NLFT	National Liberation Front of Twipra
TATCF	Tripura Armed Tribal Commando Force
TCF	Tribal Commando Force
TLF	Tripura Liberation Force
TLOF	Tripura Liberation Organisation Front
TNA	Tripura National Army
TPDF	Tripura People's Democratic Front
TSV	Tripura State Volunteers

SIPDIS

TTDF	Tripura Tribal Democratic Force
TTVF	Tripura Tribal Volunteer Force
UBLF	United Bengali Liberation Front

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